

# IDEAS 17

**International Online Teachers Society  
Debate  
Educational Materials For  
Advance and Upper Intermediate  
Students**



**International Online Teachers Society  
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## SHE TURNS NORTH

Ream Odetallah  
Class of 2003, University of Jordan  
MA English Language and Literature

She is pregnant with her second child and her love for her husband has begun to wither. Her hope for a new beginning with him is no longer an accomplishment to be obtained, for they both have dug their own paths of life, and each path leads to a different direction. Her path was guided by a new soul that is seeking for love and attention, so she finds it crucial to change directions to diminish the agony she has long suffered from out of love.

A spiritual suffocation is more comprehensive than any other kinds since it involves love. Genuine love. Love brings harmony, unity, peace, wisdom and advancement in life, summoning for a hand to grow with and to embrace the little souls that count on the hands responsible for bringing them up. She knew from the start that one hand is insufficient and her only solution is to tie her own hand with the other two hands and seek for God's mercy as she takes the train northwards.

A lot of humps are being encountered as she heads up, but as an optimist woman she has realized that every problem has a solution. Nothing is impossible when logic gets in the picture, but when one feels down and builds pessimism upon another, without witty analysis, definitely fogs of anger, depression, grudge and suicidal thoughts would be leading that person's life. Her new soul does not want her to go down and deliver her baby in a foggy world, so she has to get into that train and head north where she may find harmony for the rest of their lives.

Her husband knew her plan and was not satisfied with her accomplishments and popularity. He must mislead her according to his beliefs to content what his abilities could afford, mentally, socially and financially. Rebelling him is not easy, but in the end freedom would be obtained. Freedom is all what she wants to get back on track. Changes could be risky, but changes could be good and that what makes her feeling good during the moments of grief.

A new change means new philosophy and self-development or time for evolvement to add a new charisma into the old souls. This change has come from her unborn child who has brought into her the motherly instincts again to cherish her existence as a woman and as a person. She has lifted herself from her bed and has turned directly to the bedroom's window, opening its doors to welcome into her body life's nourishment. She has moved to her other child's bedroom, kissing her passionately until she has waken up and the three of them has passed their love to one another, too excited to ride the train to the North of their Lives!

Questions:

1. What does the direction 'north' imply in relevance to the passage?
2. How is the author describing the relationship between the pregnant woman and her husband?
3. What is the woman's hope in her dark journey?
4. Which word best describes the metaphoric 'train'?
5. Think of factors or features of your life's nourishments.



## CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

Marian Baltazar  
Class of 1980, University of the Philippines College of Manila  
AB Political Science

In this yuletide season that we are now in, it will just be a matter of days till the year ends. To be exact, we only have 8 days countdown until another year transpires. It is also during the New Year that ...we think of having a change or changes in our life to become a better person. Whatever situations we are in like dealing with difficult relationships, constantly having personal growth, or finding happiness in this corrupt and ever changing world that we are in, what can be more important than to gain control over your personal life! We can take this first step to change for the better! Each and everyone would definitely want to set his goals for the attainment of a dream come true! Problems come our way and we would want to solve each one of them and to reclaim our lives.

We all experience change; the baby will grow up to be a cute child and then grow up to become a man or a woman. The course of the wind changes and so do the course of rivers change across the centuries! Even the shapes of the mountains do change. Everything on earth changes! Nothing in this world is stagnant because anything under the sun is liable to change but there are times that we do not accept it easily. We all agree that there was a time in the past that we have been a short-tempered, unreasonable person and even a nagging spouse. All of these are indications that in one way or another we carried a baggage along the way that made us feel we are the worst person on earth. Due to some unavoidable circumstances, we create a little monster inside of us and few people can see right through it.

So there is still hope somewhere for we are well aware of what we have become. It follows then that if we can change for the worse, we can also have the ability to change for the better. We can change for the better if we do not shatter ourselves from the people who give us their feedback from well-intentioned sources. Do you want to harness the positives or the advantages of change? Then we have to be open and listen to the criticisms from the people around us. Let us be honest to ourselves and be aware of our deficiencies. Afterwards, we have to act on their feedback even how grave it would be. Detach yourself away from the problem; choose an approach that you prefer and the best of all is to know your problem first. Know the root of the problem to take out the cause and change for the better.

We have the power to change ourselves and if you do not like the person that you are now, then become the person that you want yourself to be. If you believe on something, then you can do it! Even if all the circumstances does not allow you to create the best of you and become a better person, the time to do make a change is now! Think positive and eradicate those negative vibes that are in you. Hope for the best and that outcome will hold true for you. There is nothing to lose but everything to gain. Let us welcome 2012 with a great hope and a great change for the betterment of our lives!

Questions for discussion:

1. What is the worst thing that happened in your life that you think you cannot change at all?
2. Can change be radical?
3. Do we entertain criticisms constructively? How?
4. Do you like the person that you are right now? Why or why not?
5. By what means can you best eradicate pessimism to become an optimistic person?



## THE UNSTOPPABLE NATURE OF CHANGE

Marian Baltazar  
Class of 1980, University of the Philippines College of Manila  
AN Political Science

Change has its various meanings and it can even be referred to as transformation and transition. It covers a very broad meaning and we need to delve to understand the kinds of changes that occur around us. We have experienced changes in our life in the past more than the changes that our past generations ever had in their lives. Thanks to modern technology and the present computer age for we have had overnight millennium changes which transformed the world into a whole new one! But on the contrary, we undergo a defying series of events where nature plays an important factor. There are numerous typhoons that have hit several countries which baffled us and left some poverty-stricken nations shattered! Not to mention the recent earthquake and tsunami that hit Japan and washed out several houses and even one of their power plant.

Over time nature, has caused damage and destruction in more ways than one. Aside from the earthquake, tsunami, typhoons, storms, tornadoes, cyclones, floods, bush fires, droughts, landslides, etc. Most of these change in nature caused immense damage and as humans, we are unable to hinder. Not only did these people lose their valuable possessions but event their loved ones too during these times. What's more there was a recent flash flood that struck in the Philippines and in the span of 24 hours, swept the people off their feet inside their houses, killing a lot of people including the children, leaving them homeless and with nothing at all.

Many communities were affected and devastated by all of these events for the past couple of months. To name a few, there were the three most disastrous events which took place as follows: the " Black Christmas " bush fires, the recent irrepressible rains in the Sydney and Illawara Regions and Cyclone Chris which swept through the Northwest of Western Australia. This disaster caused extensive damage and economic instability in these regions, which of course they would not be able to quickly recover from. The dilemma of coping with the change around us never stops. It continues till who knows when. Whatever it is, nature will always take its course and only God knows what will happen next. The concept of natural change is unstoppable. We cannot change the unstoppable will of God. The only recourse is to understand it and accept the change to face life's reality.

The most important thing is not to be depressed for we have to go and move on whatever the cost is for we are living in this changeable world. After all, it's the impermanence and unpredictability that makes life not only worth living but tolerable. To quote, " Absolute certainty is a menace and aspiring to this makes us disbelieve our dreams." So let us live up to our hopes and dreams for nothing can stop us from achieving them! Let time take its course.

Questions for discussion:

- 1.How does the unstoppable change of nature affect your way of thinking?
- 2.If you were to choose to live again, would you still chose the way of life that you are facing now? Why and why not?
- 3.What is the real meaning of change for you?
- 4.Site a major change that happened to your life and how did it affect you?
- 5.Will you allow nature to take its course for you to experience a changed life?



## CHANGE THAT MATTERS

Kathlyn Q. Barrozo  
Class of 1991, University of Santo Tomas  
B.S. Medical Technology

Many people clamor for change, so much so, that they decide to take their demands for change out onto the streets. Even individuals themselves feel strongly about change that they feel change has to happen right here, right now. If truth be told, despite the fact that there always seems to be someone somewhere seeking to institute some changes, how can we know whether change is necessary? When is it an inevitable part of life? In order to truly say that change is necessary, we must first be able to point out the nature of the matter that needs to be changed.

First, is the thing inherently bad? Has it had any unwelcome/undesirable effects in and of itself? Would the change be a welcome alternative to the initial or original nature of that thing? If the answer to all these questions is in the affirmative, then we should by all means institute a change. A case in point: if a certain policy has been found to be defective rather than effective in more ways than one, then a proposal must be made to make changes in such a policy. No self-respecting leader of an institution would wish to be caught in a vacuum of stagnancy and utter mishandling.

Second, has the matter been found to be deficient or lacking in many respects? Is the deficiency only to be addressed by a total or complete overhaul? Then by all means, institute a change. This commonly shows how plain remedial measures will not totally eradicate a problem, so it would be a much better approach if the problem is broken down to find what is missing. When the missing component is found, ask yourself: if this component is replaced, would it in any way affect the efficiency factor of all the other components? If simple remedial measures would just do more harm than good, then thoughts should lean more toward total change. Third, has the thing or point to be changed been rendered inutile? Useless to such a point that makes it absolutely unusable? If so, the best and only alternative left open is to replace the whole thing entirely. You wouldn't bring a car that's been totally wrecked to the auto shop for repairs, would you? You'd only be wasting valuable time and money, resources which you could rather put to better use. Crying over spilt milk is a sign of immaturity. The best thing to do is recoup your losses and start all over again on a clean slate.

Lastly, is the principle/thing/matter an old and antiquated one? How would it perform before all others that are much newer and more modern? This is probably the principle behind the oh-so-frequent changes in all things multimedia. Remember that whatever you have now might not amount to anything at all two or three years down the road.

In conclusion, before instituting any sort of change, try to look at that which needs changing. Perhaps change is either long overdue or as yet unnecessary.

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. What are your thoughts about change in general?
2. Can you easily tell when something needs to be changed or not?
3. How do you decide when to do changes?
4. What, in your opinion, need to be changed in your life right now?
5. How would you change the world in your own way?



## IS CHANGE EASY?

Kathlyn Q. Barrozo  
Class of 1991, University of Santo Tomas  
B.S. Medical Technology

We've often heard it repeated that nothing is ever easy. Everything has been designed to pose a challenge, and that includes change. We can not easily forsake the tried and proven for what has been untried and untested--- the chances of failure may prove to be great. But as progressive individuals, we must learn to take things as they come, including change.

Why is change often necessary? Simply because if you don't institute some form of change, you might get run over. This is a world that thrives on maximizing time: time for new measures; time for better policies; time for changes. It's a rat race, and you wouldn't want to be caught flat-footed.

How is change instituted? How does it happen? It could be in a gradual manner, and if so, would be wonderful. But more often than not, changes happen at the blink of an eye. It has gotten to be so that you might never know what hit you. Therefore, stay on the lookout, be alert. It would be much better to be ready and not have to use what you have armed yourself with in the preparation than to not be ready at all. That would perhaps be the greatest tragedy—to lament your losses when they could've been avoided in the first place.

When is change necessary? This is probably the most difficult question to answer. As a rule, change what is useless or old or extremely deficient. Aim for something newer, better, more useful and complete. Unfortunately, the yardstick for change may seem to be too long for some while being too short for others. We would be better off deciding for ourselves when change is truly necessary, and necessary right now.

When we live life to the fullest, these questions may not be needed at all. If we constantly hone ourselves and develop whatever needs to be developed, then changes might be few and far between. However, living a life worth living will more often entail making adjustments within the person and his ideals or beliefs. Otherwise, you'd just get stuck with an empty, boring, uninteresting life.

We encourage the younger generation to make changes. Yet how many of us actually are prepared to make changes of our own? How many among us have actually taken steps to make changes in our existence? The answer, much too often, is almost none. Those who have actually gone out, dared or ventured to make changes are too few to make a significant impact. Perhaps, they who have done so have been recognized as visionaries in their respective fields.

The good news is, we can all become agents of change. All we need to do is study ourselves thoroughly, and start with the man we see in the mirror.

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSIONS:

1. In your opinion, which people have been good agents of change? Be able to talk about their contributions to the world.
2. Are you prepared to make your own changes to the world we live in? What will those changes be?
3. Are there things you wish to change? What are they and why do you feel they need to be changed?
4. Is it ever easy for you to change something about yourself? Explain your answer.
5. Do you know of any one who finds change difficult to deal with?



## RESOLUTIONS VS REVOLUTION

Kathlyn Q. Barrozo  
Class of 1991, University of Santo Tomas  
B.S. Medical Technology

It's almost that time of year again when people from all walks of life try to make an assessment of the year that has just passed and ask themselves: What should I change in me? Personally, I have been a frequent maker of resolutions at the start of every New Year. The funny thing though is that I am also one among the many who easily breaks their resolutions, which have been carefully set to be fulfilled at the onset, during the first quarter of the year or earlier.

Why do we trouble ourselves making those resolutions anyway? The answer lies in the enticing nature of challenges. We are all geared, more or less, to the unthinkable. We find the unknowable quite fascinating. So we go on and make resolutions regardless of whether we have every intention of keeping them. Resolutions are things that make us hopeful for better things to come if we are able to keep them. Failure is just a small part of the framework of making resolutions.

Revolutionary people, on the other hand, have a healthy respect for reforms and are willing to go the extra mile to have those reforms implemented. These individuals act on the changes, not wait around for someone else to do it for them. For such people, a change will never happen if they do not instigate it. Such people are to be emulated, and supported if need be. They keep the cycle of life forever moving, the wheels of change constantly oiled and running. These are people who mean NOW when they say now. They have a firm belief in their principles, and are never too weak to give up so easily. Such people are what we should strive to be.

When you make a resolution during the coming year, make your last resolution a promise to keep all your resolutions. Commit to what you are sure you can do, never beyond. Promising to do something undoable would just give you too many disappointments, so focus your sights on something smaller, more manageable, something more doable. This way, you do not set yourself up for too many disappointments along the way.

Setting your sights too high may cause too many miscalculations. Remember the story of Daedalus and Icarus? Daedalus and his son Icarus were imprisoned in a very high tower. Daedalus studied how the birds flew, and decided to craft wings for himself and his son. He patiently collected the feathers that fell from the birds each day, and when he had collected enough, fashioned them into wings. This story does not have a happy ending though, but let it teach us that change is easy if we take the initial steps, no matter how small they may be. We all have to start somewhere.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Have you got a list of New Year's resolutions? Talk about them in class.
2. Why are resolutions so easy to make but so hard to keep?
3. Which resolutions are always the easiest for you to keep?
4. Be able to tell the story of Daedalus and Icarus in class. What lessons did you learn from the story, if any?
5. Why does change have to come from within? Explain your answer in detail.





## THE ONLY THING CONSTANT IS CHANGE

Kathlyn Q. Barrozo  
Class of 1991, University of Santo Tomas  
B.S. Medical Technology

Changes occur in our everyday existence in ways we often fail to recognize or see. The changes may be so infinitesimal that we would barely notice that they have indeed taken place. We can not deny that the only thing constant in life is change. This has been so since time immemorial.

Consider how today's generation considers love. In much older generations, love had been considered as something precious and for keeps. But in today's world where text messages and tasteless jokes run in perfect unison, love has somehow become a cheap commodity. There are still young people out there who still consider love as something essential, not to be dilly-dallied with. Or maybe, young people have changed in such a way that love no longer is something to be taken too seriously until they are ready to commit. In this respect, then the present generation wins points singlehandedly.

Consider how lifestyles have changed, too. Nowadays, it is not unusual for both parents to have jobs. Life, after all, has become more challenging and difficult. Unlike before, when mothers were only responsible for the home and fathers brought home their earnings for the family upkeep, today's mothers prefer to keep their own careers. Yes, telecommuting has become a welcome option for many mothers, but those who do opt to stay home and do their jobs in the virtual world should try to get out whenever they can. It can be lonely just spending the whole time at home.

Consider how health trends have changed in the past decade or so. From bulimic and anorexic models and celebrities, we get such diet fads as the South Beach diet, the Atkins diet, the after six diet, the banana diet, the paleo diet. I am unable to name any more, as these have been the most popular at this time. The trend is towards cutting back on harmful elements while freely indulging in what is deemed as health-friendly and beneficial. These all are well and good. But we must consider that to be able to afford the changes that such trends entail, we must be ready to make sacrifices.

Consider too, that trends tend to be temporary. Barely has a fashion trend been instituted than another one runs close to its heels. Such is the bitter reality of changes, they are never permanent. This is why they are called changes, after all. They never stay the same.

As individuals living in a pretty fast-paced world, we must learn to take changes in stride. Adapt, adjust, and change our perspectives, if we must. It's the only way to survive in a world where the only thing constant is change.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Are you a follower of trends? Talk about the trends you have followed so far.
2. Why do you think trends change so often?
3. Is it advisable to follow trends? Why or why not?
4. Why is following trends sometimes not advisable?
5. If change is good, why do people sometimes find them hard to do?



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